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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY
VICE CHAIRMAN OF COURTS, INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY AND THE INTERNET
REGULATORY REFORM, COMMERCIAL AND
ANTITRUST LAW
COMMITTEE ON RULES
VICE CHAIRMAN OF
HOUSE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write in strong support of the satellite market modification petition submitted by Franklin County, seeking coverage of in-state broadcasting from Atlanta-based stations. This petition is the culmination of years of work by the Franklin County government in support of their residents' need for access to in-state television programming for news, weather, and sports. A recent survey found that over 94% of respondents in four orphan counties in Northeast Georgia, including Franklin County, are interested in receiving in-state television broadcasting, highlighting the importance of this issue among county residents.

Residents of Franklin County who subscribe to satellite television currently receive only local programming from broadcasting stations in the Asheville, North Carolina and Greenville, South Carolina media markets. As a result, residents are deprived of the range of critical information that in-state broadcasters provide to their communities. Since weather patterns in this region generally move from west to east, residents depend on public safety messages that come through in-state broadcasters. Thus, the provision of local broadcasting options represents a matter of public safety as well as an important cultural and economic link between Franklin County and the rest of Georgia.

This petition comes after years of effort in the legislative and executive branches of our government as well as at the state level. I worked alongside Congressional colleagues and stakeholders to develop a viable solution that was ultimately included the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Reauthorization (STELAR) Act of 2014. The Commission's promulgation of final rulemaking in September of 2015 and the issuance of the first market modification orders in early 2017, pursuant to the STELAR Act, provides hope that the residents of the counties in Northeast Georgia will finally have access to the local broadcasting that they so urgently want and need.

I urge the Commission to diligently review Franklin County's petition and work with all affected stakeholders to quickly complete consideration of their satellite market modification petitions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Doug Collins
Member of Congress